

**California Department of Education**  
**Jack O'Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction**



# Elementary Education Newsletter

## Greetings from the Superintendent ...

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This issue of the *Elementary Education Newsletter* addresses topics for the summer months and beyond. The articles in this edition focus on the California No Child Left Behind Title I schools nominated for national recognition, Healthy Start grants, the summer food service program, National Board Certification for California teachers, and additional topics related to school improvement.

As I said in my State of Education speech earlier this year, I am pleased to be able to celebrate the measurable gains California has made under standards-based reform and I thank all of you for your hard work in the solid achievement gains that have been made by every student group in our state. All student groups have improved, but we nevertheless have failed to close the achievement gaps that threaten the future of far too many students and the future of our diverse state. Accordingly, I have embarked on an effort to take a deeper and more comprehensive look at achievement gaps among student subgroups and to examine the specific issues affecting each, and this effort will be the primary focus of my P-16 Council in the coming year.

In November I will be hosting a summit focused on closing the achievement gap. The summit will bring together educators from throughout California to share what has been learned about the achievement gap, what is known, and what can be done to more quickly close the gap.

As we work together to address the achievement gap, I firmly believe character education should be embedded in the core curriculum and school culture in all California schools. Parents and schools should partner in teaching children manners, morals, respect for others, and responsibility for the community in which we live. California has the most diverse, the most challenging, and

**Greetings from the Superintendent  
(Continued)**

most promising student population in the nation. I know dedicated character education programs along with academic programs tailored to the individual needs of all of our students will help us close the gap and maybe even take a step toward creating a world where community service and putting others first is commonplace.

I look forward to working with all of you in this effort, and I thank you for your dedication to truly preparing California's students for success, from preschool through high school and beyond.

JACK O'CONNELL

**Two California No Child Left Behind Title I Schools Nominated for National Honor**

The two schools nominated for the 2006-07 National No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Award are KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy in the San Diego Unified School District and Manchester GATE School in the Fresno Unified School District. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell stated that both of these schools are known for their rigorous curricula and high expectations that challenge and inspire their students. The Superintendent also stated that the schools provide the kind of nurturing environment and innovative programs that bring out the best in their students. Both schools received an award during the National Title I Conference that was held in Long Beach, California, January 27–30, 2007.

Manchester GATE School received the award for having the greatest percentage of students who scored at or above the proficient level for adequate yearly progress (AYP) in reading, language arts, and mathematics and for having exceeded its AYP for more than two years. KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy received the award for making the most progress toward closing the achievement gap among numerically significant subgroups at the school.

The Title I program is a part of the federal NCLB law. Title I is designed to provide equity for academically at-risk children and access to a high-quality education to enable them to reach proficiency in the state-adopted academic content standards as measured by state assessments. The Title I Distinguished Schools program is sponsored by the National Association of State Title I Director, and is designed to recognize outstanding Title I schools that are considered to be national models of excellence.

**KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy**

KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy, a direct-funded charter school, offers students and parents in southeastern San Diego a new alternative—a small, college-preparatory public school. KIPP Adelante was one of two schools nominated for the 2006-07 National No Child Left Behind Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Award. KIPP Adelante made the most progress in closing the achievement gap among numerically significant subgroups enrolled

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**KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy  
(Continued)**

at the school. The school made an increase of 104 points on the Academic Performance Index in 2006 with a score of 858. The school also successfully met the adequate yearly progress criteria in 2006.

Principal Kelly Wright was formerly a fifth grade teacher at a school located in an area with very limited resources. During that time she was concerned about having to send her students on to a middle school that was one of the lowest-performing schools in the area. She founded KIPP Adelante in 2003 to provide students access to a high-quality middle school. KIPP Adelante, located in downtown San Diego, is a Title I school with a schoolwide designation; 90 percent of its students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. The school staff includes 13 regular teachers; and a part-time special education specialist is provided by the San Diego Unified School District.

The mission of KIPP Adelante is to ensure that students develop the academic skills, intellectual habits, and character traits needed to succeed in top-quality high schools, colleges, and the competitive world beyond. The staff, who share the belief that all students will meet grade-level standards by the end of the school year, exemplify strong effort; and the attitude of “whatever it takes” to raise student academic achievement permeates the school culture. The instructional program is based on the nationally acclaimed KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) model. KIPP Adelante’s instructional program is rigorous and aligned with the State Board of Education-adopted academic content standards. The staff provide instruction through the use of a balanced literacy program for reading/language arts and the Saxon Mathematics and Prentice Hall curriculum for mathematics and algebra. Student progress is monitored by standards-based assessments administered every six weeks. Because many of the students come to KIPP Adelante achieving below grade-level standards, a longer school day was implemented to bring students up to grade-level. The school’s schedule allows time for instruction in all academic subjects as well as enrichment activities that include a string orchestra, choir, visual arts, and foreign languages.

KIPP Adelante is described by the principal as having an environment of achievement—the key to the school’s success. All staff strive to provide students with exposure to as many opportunities as possible. Students participate in field trips to cultural sites throughout the city, such as museums and the symphony, and to college campuses. To learn about life on a college campus, KIPP students participate in a program that allows them to shadow college students at San Diego State University. At the end of the school year, students visit other cities to explore cultural sites and universities during multi-day field lessons. Because the school strongly focuses on college preparation, KIPP Adelante students are provided the experience of having visited 20 college campuses by the time they are promoted from eighth grade.

Students receive additional academic support from a tutoring program offered before school, during lunchtime, and after school. The tutoring program is supported by college students from the University of California, San Diego; teachers who give of their time; and students’ peers. KIPP Adelante has also established partnerships, one with the San Diego Young Artists Music

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**KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy  
(Continued)**

Academy to work with the school's choir and another with SAP, a local company that provided a full day of community service to configure the school's computer lab and to beautify the campus.

The small-school environment at KIPP Adelante fosters a team spirit and sense of family among students and teachers in a respectful school climate where manners, kindness, and other traits in character education are emphasized. Students are greeted daily with a handshake, are recognized for their achievement, and are able to contact their teachers on dedicated cell phones to ask questions about their homework at night. The school's motto is "Work hard, be nice, dream big."

**California Instructional School Garden Grants**

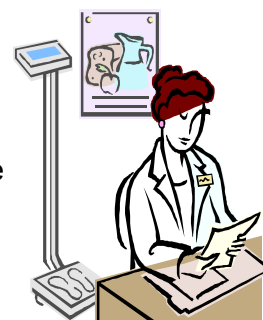
Assembly Bill 1535 (Núñez) (Chapter 437 of the Statutes of 2006) authorizes the California Department of Education (CDE) to award \$15 million in grants to promote, create, and support California Instructional School Gardens (CISG). The grants will serve to complement a school's academic program and create opportunities for children to learn how to make healthier food choices, participate more successfully in their educational experiences, and develop a deeper appreciation of their community.

Grant funds may be used to purchase equipment and supplies, such as gardening tools, planters, composting systems, irrigation systems, seeds and plants, and garden-based learning materials. Funds may also be used for professional development, such as registration fees and travel related to instructional school gardens; substitute pay for teachers and other staff during instructional school garden-related professional development; and other garden-related professional development and technical assistance.

These noncompetitive CISG grants are available to California school districts, direct-funded charter schools, and county offices of education. School sites with fewer than 1,000 students may apply for grants of up to \$2,500; schools with an enrollment of 1,000 or more may apply for grants of up to \$5,000. Applications for CISG grants are available on the CDE Web site under "Available Funding" at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo>. The deadline to submit applications is April 20, 2007.

**Healthy Start Grants**

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell will announce the recipients of the Healthy Start combined planning and operational grants and the operational grants for cohort 13 in spring 2007. The California Legislature established the Healthy Start Support Services for Children Act in 1991. Grantees work together with their collaborative partners to measurably improve the lives of children and their families by providing culturally appropriate, integrated, accessible, and strengths-based supports and services located at or near schools.



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**Healthy Start Grants  
(Continued)**

Governor Schwarzenegger has allocated \$10 million for Healthy Start grants and created a new funding structure for the 2006-07 fiscal year.

The new funding structure allows local educational agencies (LEAs) for the first time to submit combined planning and operational grants that are available for expenditure for up to seven years. The operational grant was available to LEAs that were previously awarded collaborative planning grants who demonstrated their readiness to begin or expand a system of comprehensive, school-integrated services and supports to assist children, youths, and families in achieving educational success and well-being. The combined grants have been funded up to a maximum of \$450,000, which includes \$50,000 for the planning phase (years one and two) and \$400,000 for the operational phase (years three through seven) for seven years. Operational grants have been funded for the maximum amount of \$400,000, which includes the \$300,000 grant award plus one-time start-up funding of up to \$100,000 for five years.

All applications were reviewed by readers February 21–23, 2007, during the Healthy Start Readers Conference in Sacramento. The California Department of Education will post the final notification of grant awards on the Department's Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/hs> in May 2007.

**Summer Food Service Program**

What Is the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)?



It is a program that provides free, nutritious meals and snacks to children in low-income communities throughout the summer months when students are out of school. The SFSP targets areas in which at least 50 percent of the children served are eligible to receive free or reduced-price school meals. The program may operate whenever schools in the community are on summer vacation for at least 15 continuous school days or when year-round schools are in their off-track portion of their cycle. Eligible agencies may now also serve snacks after

school to children who are in some type of an after-school program.

The food service programs are run at approved sites located at schools, community centers, camps, Indian tribal governments, private nonprofit agencies, and municipal, state, county, or local government offices. Meals served may be prepared by the participating agency or obtained from a public or commercial food vendor or a school food-service department. All meals must meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture's minimum meal patterns, which ensure that children receive the nutrients they need to be better prepared when returning to school. Operational and administrative records must be maintained to claim reimbursement.

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**Summer Food Service Program  
(Continued)**

Children are eligible to receive the free meals and snacks if they are eighteen years of age or younger. At most sites children receive either one or two meals each day. School districts may obtain additional information about the SFSP posted on the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sf/> or by contacting Melissa Garza by phone at 800-952-5609 or 916-322-5885 or by e-mail at [mgarza@cde.ca.gov](mailto:mgarza@cde.ca.gov).

**Ten Steps Toward Healthy Living**

Governor Schwarzenegger has set forth a ten-point vision to promote an environment that encourages regular physical activity, healthful eating habits, and better lifestyle choices for Californians. He has challenged the people of California to join him in the goal of making our state a national model for healthy living. The Governor developed a guide titled “A Vision for California—10 Steps Toward Healthy Living”, which was presented to the Governor’s Summit on Health, Nutrition, and Obesity, held in Sacramento in September 2005. The ten steps are as follows:

1. Californians will understand the importance of physical activity and healthy eating, and they will make healthier choices based on their understanding.
2. Every day, every child will participate in physical activities.
3. California’s adults will be physically active every day.
4. Schools will only offer healthy foods and beverages to students.
5. Only healthy foods and beverages will be marketed to children ages 12 and under.
6. Produce and other fresh, healthy food items will be affordable and available in all neighborhoods.
7. Neighborhoods, communities, and buildings will support physical activity, including safe walking, stair climbing, and bicycling.
8. Healthy foods and beverages will be accessible, affordable, and promoted in grocery stores, restaurants, and entertainment venues.
9. Health insurers and health care providers will promote physical activity and healthy eating.
10. Employees will have access to physical activity and healthy food options.

“A Vision for California—Ten Steps Toward Healthy Living” can be viewed online at [http://www.governor.ca.gov/govsite/pdf/press\\_release\\_2005/Governors\\_Vision.pdf](http://www.governor.ca.gov/govsite/pdf/press_release_2005/Governors_Vision.pdf).

**National Board Certification for  
California Teachers**

The number of teachers in California who have attained the prestigious National Board Certification and recognition has tripled over the past five years. Earlier this year State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell congratulated 293 California teachers who have received advanced certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

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**National Board Certification for****California Teachers  
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The total number of National Board Certified Teachers in California now stands at 3,659, tripling the number from 1,303 in 2001 and moving our state into sixth place in the nation for having the highest number of teachers earning this certification, according to the NBPTS. Almost 40 percent of these certified teachers work in high-priority schools, and all meet the definition of a “highly qualified teacher” as defined in the federal NCLB.

National Board Certification is the highest credential in the teaching profession. A state teaching license or credential allows one to begin a career in teaching, while National Certification is recognition of accomplished teaching.

The NBPTS offers three Generalist Certifications on the basis of student ages. Some Generalists are assigned to teach a single subject, such as humanities, while others may be assigned to teach multiple subjects. All Generalists, without regard to their assignment, practice in a manner designed to advance student learning in two or more subjects.

Over an approximately six-month period, teachers seeking National Board Certification must create a four-part portfolio to showcase their practice. The portfolio includes written analyses of student work, two classroom videos, and evidence of candidates’ involvement outside the classroom with their profession and with their students’ families and community.

Candidates are also required to sit for six 30-minute assessments on content. For a description of what is considered content for a particular Generalist Certification and other related information, please visit <http://www.nbpts.org/>.

It can take up to three years to earn National Board Certification. Approximately 40 percent of first-time candidates achieve this certification. Candidates receive ten scores (four portfolio scores and six assessment center scores) and may bank passing scores for two years while they retake entries. In general, candidates who are part of a support group have a higher achievement rate.

The application fee for National Board Certification is \$2,500. The California Department of Education (CDE) administers the federal Candidate Subsidy Program (CSP), which provides fee assistance to candidates. Additionally, many districts provide fee support for their teachers. The state offers a \$20,000 incentive award to National Board Certified Teachers who teach in high-priority schools. For details about this award, which is subject to funding in the annual Budget Act, the CSP, National Board Certification in California, and information about how various school districts support this certification, please visit the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/te/nbpts.asp>.

The names of the 3,659 National Board Certified Teachers in California are posted on the National Board Web site at <http://www.nbpts.org/>. For more information about NBPTS activity in California, including a 50 percent candidate fee subsidy, please visit the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/te/nbpts.asp>.

## Student Immunizations

The California School Immunization law requires that all children entering school receive proper immunizations to protect them from serious illness and to prevent the spread of communicable diseases: polio, measles, rubella, mumps, hepatitis B, varicella (chickenpox), diphtheria, tetanus, *haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib meningitis), and whooping cough.



For parents with children entering kindergarten in fall 2007, the summer months are a good time to check immunization records and bring immunizations up to date as needed. The California School Immunization Law requires written documentation of complete and up-to-date immunizations at the time of school registration. The immunization record must show the date of each shot your child has received. If your child has not received the required number of immunizations, your child's doctor or a local public health clinic can provide what is needed. An appointment may be necessary. Many schools begin accepting kindergarten registrations during May, and students' school and class assignments are made on a first-come basis. Therefore, the sooner parents complete the registration process, including the completion of required immunizations, the better the chances of their child's assignment to the school in the family's area of residence. Parents of students entering a new school or district may also need to provide evidence of complete and up-to-date immunizations.



In addition to providing proof of up-to-date immunizations, parents of students in kindergarten (or in grade one if it is the students' first year in public school) are now required to submit proof of their children having an oral health assessment performed by a licensed dentist or other licensed or registered dental health professional. This new requirement was brought about by Assembly Bill 1433 (*Education Code* Section 49452.8), which was enacted on January 1, 2007. If you have questions related to the implementation of this legislation, please contact Donna Bezdecheck by e-mail at [dbezdech@cde.ca.gov](mailto:dbezdech@cde.ca.gov) or by telephone at 916-319-0283.

A complete list of required immunizations can be found at the California Department of Health Services Web site at [http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dcdc/izgroup/family/infants/iz\\_timing\\_infants.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dcdc/izgroup/family/infants/iz_timing_infants.htm).

## Summer Reading Tips for Families

The warm months of May through August provide a season of opportunities for families to get involved in a variety of outdoor activities and events. Although summertime is when many families participate in vacations, barbecues, sports, water recreation, and camping trips, it is important that parents remember to include reading as a priority in their children's summer activities. Students spend approximately one quarter of the year outside of school, and a large

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**Summer Reading Tips for Families  
(Continued)**

portion of that time is during the summer break. During those months children should be encouraged to read something every day. To avoid a decline in their children's reading achievement, parents need to find ways to get books or other reading materials into the hands of their children during the summer break because the best way to improve reading is to keep reading. The following are suggestions for motivating children to read during the summer break:

- Take your children to the public library to get a library card (if they don't already have one) and allow them to check out books. Ask the librarian about the Read Across the USA program, recommended reading lists, and the library's schedule of events for the summer months.
- Schedule trips to bookstores to purchase books.
- Read aloud to your children and have them read to you.
- Refer to *Recommended Literature: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*, a collection of titles of outstanding literature for children and adolescents. The titles reflect the quality and the complexity of the types of material students should be reading at school and outside of class. The searchable database for *Recommended Literature: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* is available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/ll/>.

Parents can also find appropriate reading materials, on the basis of their children's scores on standardized tests, through the California Reading List posted on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/readinglist.asp>. Another resource is the Reading is Fundamental Web site at [http://www.rif.org/parents/articles/what\\_can\\_families\\_do.msp](http://www.rif.org/parents/articles/what_can_families_do.msp).

***The Visitor's Guide to High-Performing Elementary Schools***

[\*The Visitor's Guide to High-Performing Elementary Schools\*](#) (*The Guide*), a new Web based directory developed by the Elementary Education Office, provides profiles of the 2006 California Distinguished Elementary Schools, Academic Achievement Award Schools, and National Blue Ribbon Schools. Each school profile includes the school's demographic and achievement data and descriptions of its proven practices. In addition to the school profiles, *The Guide* provides a means by which educators can learn strategies from one another through phone, e-mail, and on-site interactions. School leaders searching for solutions to student performance issues will find useful, timely information from schools that have been recognized for student achievement. *The Guide* will be on the CDE Web site in late spring 2007.

If you have any questions about *The Guide*, please contact Shobhana Rishi by phone at 916-319-0780 or by e-mail at [srishi@cde.ca.gov](mailto:srishi@cde.ca.gov).

## Calendar of Events

### May

May 18, 2007  
California Department of Education  
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/cs/>  
2007 California Distinguished School Awards Ceremony  
Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim, California  
Carol Kennedy, [ckennedy@cde.ca.gov](mailto:ckennedy@cde.ca.gov), 916-319-0866

### October

October 25–28, 2007  
California Science Teachers Association  
<http://www.cascience.org/conference.html>  
California Science Education Conference  
Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, California  
Jessica Lewis or Jenna Bellato, [conference@cascience.org](mailto:conference@cascience.org), 916-979-7004

### November

November 1–4, 2007  
Association of Mexican American Educators  
<http://www.amae.org/>  
Motivating Latino Students to Achieve Excellence  
Radisson Hotel, Santa Maria, California  
Dana Valverde, [sefeliz@aol.com](mailto:sefeliz@aol.com), 805-938-9830

November 2–4, 2007  
California Mathematics Council  
<http://www.cmc-math.org/conferences>  
Annual Conference  
Palm Springs Convention Center, Palm Springs, California  
Mike Contino, [cmc-math@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cmc-math@sbcglobal.net), 888-262-6284

November 29–December 2, 2007  
California Mathematics Council  
<http://www.cmc-math.org/conferences>  
50th Annual Mathematics Conference  
Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, California  
Mike Contino, [cmc-math@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cmc-math@sbcglobal.net), 888-262-6284

## Resources

Programmatic and fiscal resources to build, implement, and sustain the quality of before-and-after school programs, including school-age care and other out-of-school opportunities for children and youths, are posted on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://staging.cde.ca.gov/ls/ba/index.asp>.

The CDE offers information regarding student testing on its Web site at <http://staging.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/index.asp>.

The CDE also offers information regarding curriculum frameworks, the adoption cycle for instructional materials for kindergarten through grade eight, and the academic content standards on its Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/index.asp>.

*Check It Out!* is a publication designed to help school districts and schools assess the state of their school libraries and the policies that support and guide them. The guide is posted on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/lb/checkitout.asp>.

The 2007 *Educational Resources Catalog* is available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc/>. The catalog includes descriptions of CDE publications and resources and information on how to order the documents.

The National Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) has posted several resources for parents and educators on its Web site: <http://www.pta.org/>. The organization's magazine, *Our Children*, provides parents with resources and information about how to make households, neighborhoods, schools, and communities better places for children. The newsletter is posted on the PTA Web site at [http://www.pta.org/pr\\_our\\_children\\_magazine.html](http://www.pta.org/pr_our_children_magazine.html) and is written in English and in Spanish.

Answers to frequently asked questions about pandemic flu that provide information about how schools can prepare for a possible pandemic are posted on the CDE Web site at <http://staging.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/pandemicflufaq.asp>.

The United States government has posted information about avian and pandemic flu to help people to become informed and prepared on its Web site at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>. The resources include planning checklists, questions and answers, and general information about pandemic flu.

The California Department of Health Services (CDHS) has prepared a 35-minute briefing on a DVD titled *Pandemic Influenza Preparedness in California* that provides important and timely information on the threat of avian influenza and the risk of a human influenza pandemic. Information about the briefing is posted on the CDHS Web site at [http://www.dhs.ca.gov/dcdc/izgroup/diseases/pandemic\\_fluedm.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/dcdc/izgroup/diseases/pandemic_fluedm.htm).

The Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section of CDHS has introduced a "Harvest of the Month" tool kit to encourage students to increase their consumption of a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables and engage in physical activity every day. The "Harvest of the Month" tool kit is available on the CDHS Web site at <http://www.harvestofthemonth.com/>.

The California School Garden Network provides resources for schools about how to create and sustain school gardens on its Web site at <http://www.csgn.org/>.

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**Resources  
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The California Children's 5 a Day—Power Play! Campaign works to educate, motivate, and empower children ages nine to eleven to eat fruits and vegetables and be physically active. The campaign produces a variety of materials that are research-based, educator-friendly, and appealing to children. Schools with at least 50 percent of their students enrolled in the free and reduced-price meal program can request free copies of the campaign's educational and promotional materials through their 5 a Day—Power Play! Campaign regional coordinator. To locate your regional coordinator, visit the California 5 a Day—Power Play! Web site at [http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/cpns/powerplay/pp\\_regional\\_contacts.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/cpns/powerplay/pp_regional_contacts.htm). Materials include printed copies of the "School Idea and Resource Kits" for fourth and fifth grades and student workbooks for each participating student as well as the "Community Youth Organization Idea and Resource Kit" for after school and summer programs. The kits can also be downloaded at [http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/cpns/powerplay/pp\\_resources.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/cpns/powerplay/pp_resources.htm). They will soon be available for purchase by schools that do not qualify for free copies of the materials.

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